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**Cuban Civil Society Support Program
(CCSSP)**

Contract Number DOT-I-00-03-00009-00 TO 4

Monthly Report

May 2012

Submitted June 5, 2012

1. Country Situation Update

Changes to Cuban Adjustment Act

Last month, Cuban National Assembly President Ricardo Alarcón announced that radical and profound changes to Cuba's travel restrictions will occur in coming weeks. Eliminating Cuba's prohibitive exit visa would carry tremendous economic, social and political risk, but changes to limits on how long Cubans can live overseas or reducing exit visa fees would still have significant implications. Subsequently, new legislation introduced by U.S. Representative David Rivera threatens the optimism surrounding potential reductions in travel restrictions by the Cuban government. Under Rivera's proposed bill, any Cuban national who receives political asylum and residency under the Cuban Adjustment Act, and travels to Cuba while still a resident and not yet a U.S. citizen, will have their residency status revoked. This legislation targets an arguably vulnerable group – Cubans who have arrived to the U.S. within the past two years and maintain strong connections to the island, yet who are not full U.S. citizens and lack voting rights to express their views on the issue. Earlier this year, President Obama's suspension of 2004 travel restrictions restored travel rights to Cuban immigrants with residency has countered devastating family separations forced by Cuba's own restrictive travel laws, and has coincided with one of the greatest expansion in Cuba's civil society – demonstrating how openness and contact with the outside world erodes authoritarian control over individuals. Ironically, as the Cuban regime moves toward greater openness, this legislation threatens the potential impact on Cuban civil society and citizens in achieving greater access outside of their country.

Repsol Stopping Drilling

On May 18, 2012, Spanish oil company Repsol announced that an exploratory well drilled off the north coast of Cuba came up dry, and that the company will be abandoning operations in the country. Though the decision to leave Cuba was described as "purely technical" by Repsol representatives at an investors' briefing in Madrid, Repsol's latest unsuccessful attempt, approximately 30 miles offshore, cost the company more than \$100,000,000.00. This investment follows a previous failed attempt to find oil off Cuba in 2004. With the departure of Repsol, and the Cuban government's reliance on the potentially huge oil and gas reserves for economic survival, Malaysian oil company Petronas is expected to take over offshore exploration. Cuba relies on subsidized imports from Venezuela, importing more than 100,000 barrels a day to compensate for the energy deficit resulting from domestic production meeting only half the country's energy needs. Cuba's dependence on the Chavez government is threatened by upcoming elections in Venezuela this year, and finding substantial offshore oil and natural gas sources could give the Cuban government energy independence for the first time since the U.S. embargo was put in place 50 years ago.

2. Programmatic Highlights and Major Activities

Programmatic Activities:

Key Programmatic Accomplishments:

- **Sector CP** - *This innovative sector seeks to counter apathy and stimulate civic engagement by supporting media projects that communicate positive, unbiased messages through different aspects of everyday life and humor. In previous activities under this sector, the CCSSP created a variety of media products and was able to shape the social content of the items produced to promote civic analysis and a sense of duty for the targeted audience.*
- [SJO101]: This grant is a continuation of the initiative launched under grants SJO074 and SJO095. A no cost extension was approved to continue activities through May 15. The final two milestones with corresponding products and deliverables were completed and distributed upon approval by OTI/Creative. The grantee is preparing the submission of final programmatic and financial reporting and the Final Evaluation is in progress. No further activities are planned.
- [SJO102]: This grant is a continuation of the initiative launched under grants SJO070 and SJO079. The grantee completed and distributed the two products under the final Milestone and the corresponding deliverables were received and approved by OTI/Creative. The Final Evaluation for this grant is in progress. No further activities are planned.
- [SJO103]: This grant is a continuation of the initiative launched under grant SJO076. A no cost extension was approved to continue activities through May 8. The grantee completed and distributed the final products and the corresponding deliverables, which were received and approved by OTI/Creative. The Final Evaluation for this grant is in progress. No further activities are planned.
- [SJO104]: This grant received a no cost extension to continue activities through May 11, and an additional cost extension is in process to allow for further time and resources for additional product development and distribution. The grantee is working to complete the product distribution cycle and to collect and report distribution results. No further activities are planned.
- [SJO105]: This grant is in process of cost-extension through the end of June to support additional product development and distribution. Pending the approval of CCSSP's one-month extension, activities will continue under this grant.
- [SJO107]: This grant is a continuation of the initiative launched under grant SJO084. The grantee completed and distributed the final products and the corresponding deliverables, and continued to monitor and report on activities. The grantee is preparing an activity progress report, and developing a draft work plan to continue implementation under the program extension.
- **Sector CP (2)** - *This sector has exponentially exceeded expectations, and has demonstrated a true desire for freedom of expression and a need for increased networking capacity on the island. Therefore, the CCSSP has allocated significant resources toward achieving further success in this sector.*
- [SJO100]: Final payments have been issued, and final monitoring and evaluation is underway. Pending approval of the final evaluation, this grant will be closed.

- [SJO111]: The grantee has submitted their second and third monthly reports for review, pending approval, and the third milestone payment will be issued. The platform continues to experience growth in the user base and quality of content, but sustainability efforts have yielded little concrete impact. During this reporting period, the platform was blocked, disrupting services to users. The grantee responded quickly and implemented approved contingency plans to restore service. To date, services have been uninterrupted since being restored.
- **Sector US** – *In this sector, CCSSP explored the reality of this population group and discovered significant potential for civic initiatives. With Latin American NGOs whose experience and characteristics are similar to the target population, civic activities are conducted to influence independent action.*
- **Other Activities**
 - [SJO082]: This grant is in the process of closing. OTI/Creative will issue a final assessment note after the reviewing all audit documents. There will be no further activities under this initiative.
 - [SJO090]: This grant is in the process of administrative and financial closeout.
 - [SJO096]: All activities under this grant were successfully completed. Final reports on activities were presented the second week of May, and are under review. The grantee is developing a final activity report and final financial reports. No additional activities are expected under this initiative.
 - [SJO097]: This grant is in the process of administrative closeout, pending financial reconciliations and final monitoring and evaluation.
 - [SJO099]: This grant is currently in administrative closeout. The grantee submitted documentation for final payments, which are under secondary review. The final evaluation will be written upon approval of all activity reports and the grant will be closed.
 - [SJO109]: Two beneficiaries recently travel to a third country to participate in a training session. With technical and material assistance, these beneficiaries will begin managing an independent project in the near future. The grantee is procuring additional material assistance to provide complete support to this independent project.

Program Operations

- Grants cleared to date: **108** (11 in process, 17 completed, 68 closed, 7 cancelled, 5 rejected after clearance)

Status Count				
Pending	Cleared	Completed	Closed	Cancelled / Rejected
0	11	17	68	7 / 10* *5 had been cleared

CLEARED		
1	SJO096	\$43,645.00
2	SJO097	\$42,968.00
3	SJO099	\$54,921.00

4	SJO101	\$237,901.00
5	SJO102	\$100,611.00
6	SJO103	\$22,649.00
7	SJO104	\$66,158.00

8	SJO105	\$157,543.00
9	SJO107	\$139,202.00
10	SJO109	\$63,700.00
11	SJO111	\$162,418.00

Subtotal:	\$1,091,716.00
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COMPLETED		
1	SJO076	\$71,104.00
2	SJO078	\$39,553.00
3	SJO079	\$65,219.00
4	SJO082	\$185,409.00
5	SJO083	\$35,509.00
6	SJO084	\$91,254.00
7	SJO085	\$42,903.00
8	SJO087	\$90,000.00
9	SJO090	\$50,458.00
10	SJO092	\$80,443.00
11	SJO093	\$90,000.00
12	SJO094	\$144,922.00
13	SJO095	\$36,760.00
14	SJO098	\$70,000.00
15	SJO100	\$157,024.00
16	SJO106	\$10,453.00
17	SJO108	\$15,231.00
Subtotal:	\$1,276,242.00	

CLOSED		
1	SJO001	\$95,420.00
2	SJO003	\$17,157.00
3	SJO006	\$81,421.00
4	SJO007	\$123,098.00
5	SJO008	\$34,332.00
6	SJO009	\$24,256.00
7	SJO010	\$30,359.00
8	SJO011	\$19,601.00
9	SJO012	\$14,204.00
10	SJO014	\$47,453.00
11	SJO015	\$7,328.00
12	SJO016	\$72,709.00
13	SJO017	\$2,345.00
14	SJO018	\$12,759.00
15	SJO019	\$89,059.00

16	SJO020	\$11,430.00
17	SJO022	\$72,098.00
18	SJO024	\$12,784.00
19	SJO025	\$86,994.00
20	SJO026	\$4,655.00
21	SJO027	\$4,743.00
22	SJO028	\$63,655.00
23	SJO029	\$57,625.00
24	SJO030	\$17,830.00
25	SJO031	\$5,876.00
26	SJO032	\$78,769.00
27	SJO033	\$74,390.00
28	SJO034	\$65,522.00
29	SJO035	\$19,429.00
30	SJO036	\$14,525.00
31	SJO037	\$36,210.00
32	SJO038	\$99,163.00
33	SJO039	\$38,510.00
34	SJO040	\$141,427.00
35	SJO041	\$4,947.00
36	SJO042	\$21,551.00
37	SJO044	\$86,900.00
38	SJO046	\$21,940.00
39	SJO047	\$29,152.00
40	SJO048	\$4,542.00
41	SJO049	\$89,900.00
42	SJO050	\$128,906.00
43	SJO052	\$53,161.00
44	SJO053	\$12,248.00
45	SJO054	\$30,309.00
46	SJO055	\$55,503.00
47	SJO056	\$69,091.00
48	SJO057	\$4,538.00
49	SJO058	\$125,571.00
50	SJO061	\$26,671.00
51	SJO062	\$54,802.00
52	SJO063	\$8,819.00
53	SJO064	\$4,284.00

54	SJO065	\$25,886.00
55	SJO066	\$17,308.00
56	SJO067	\$86,732.00
57	SJO068	\$49,126.00
58	SJO069	\$19,149.00
59	SJO070	\$28,838.00
60	SJO071	\$55,674.00
61	SJO072	\$213,130.00
62	SJO073	\$24,155.00
63	SJO074	\$36,328.00
64	SJO075	\$30,767.00
65	SJO077	\$176,206.00
66	SJO080	\$6,918.00
67	SJO081	\$12,245.00
68	SJO086	\$11,225.00
Subtotal:	\$3,203,658.00	

CANCELLED		
1	SJO013	\$9,825.00
2	SJO043	\$5,687.00
3	SJO045	\$16,707.00
4	SJO059	\$3,325.00
5	SJO088	\$14,808.00
6	SJO089	\$17,654.00
7	SJO091	\$3,929.00
Subtotal:	\$71,935.00	

REJECTED		
1	iSJO001	
2	iSJO010	
3	iSJO011	
4	SJO002	Rejected After Clearance
5	SJO004	
6	SJO005	
7	SJO021	
8	SJO023	
9	SJO051	Never Approved
10	SJO060	

- Activity Database (ADa): Creative staff continues to update the Activity Database with information from the field. In addition, the DC-based team is working closely with the Implementation team in the field to ensure weekly tracking of grant expenditures and maintain adequate grant/operations funds control.
- Finance: All financial transactions continue to be managed from Washington, D.C. with support from a field finance assistant, working closely with grantees to ensure timely grant implementation. Projections for the last three months of the program are being monitored weekly to ensure obligated funds are fully committed and disbursed by the end of the implementation period.
- Program Extension: Creative has received approval from OTI for a budget realignment to support a one-month no-cost extension through July 31, 2012. On May 23, 2012, Creative submitted the realignment to OAA along with an updated inventory disposition plan for approval. Creative has identified recipients for all remaining inventory items and will begin the disposition process during the closeout process.
- GAO Audit: In continued response to a request for documentation received on March 27, 2012, Creative coordinated with sub-awardees to receive final pending documents, and submitted these to OTI on May 21, 2012 fulfill this GAO request for sub-awardee programmatic and financial documentation. To provide clarification to the GAO team on sample financial transactions, the DC-based Creative team participated in conference calls on May 14, 2012 and May 25, 2012. Following these calls, Creative provided additional documentation on May 31, 2012 to supplement the initial submission of financial documentation. Creative looks forward to working with the OTI team and continued collaboration with the GAO Audit process.

3. Budget Information

CLIN	Description	Total	Obligated	Disbursed April 2012	Cumulative Amount
001	Operations	\$ 4,887,599		\$ 48,105.11	\$ 4,905,177.85
002	Fixed Fee Operations	\$ 244,380		\$ 2,405.28	\$ 245,258.71
003	Grants	\$ 10,200,000		\$ 156,623.54	\$ 5,177,895.89
004	Fixed Fee on Grants	\$ 204,000		\$ 3,132.47	\$ 103,557.99
	TOTAL	\$ 15,535,979	\$ 11,170,671	\$ 210,266.38	\$ 10,431,890.22

4. Problems Encountered: Issues and Proposed Actions

- There were no issues to report in this period.

5. Upcoming Activities

Creative has the following activities planned for June 2012:

- Creative will begin coordinating close out reporting, logistics and other administrative tasks, according to the OTI-approved closeout plan in anticipation of the program end date of July 31, 2012.
- Under the program extension, three initiatives under SJO105, SJO107 and SJO111 will be continued. Work plans, activities and financial projections will be approved for these initiatives and implemented.